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## Easter Dinner

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Elizabeth Fleming

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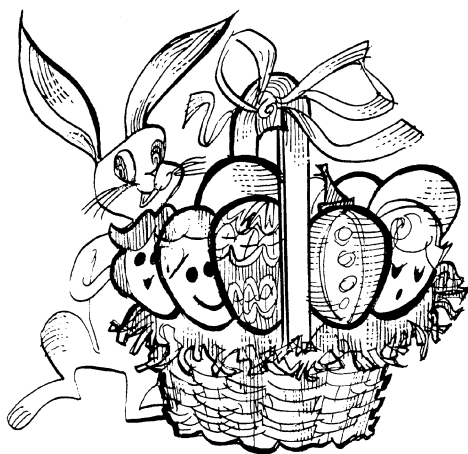
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Spindler, Evelyn B. and Fleming, Elizabeth, "Easter Dinner " (1900). *Historical Documents of the Purdue Cooperative Extension Service*. Paper 935.  
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COLD (below 40° F)? Do not let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

Can perishable foods such as seafood, poultry, and cooked meats be kept HOT (above 140° F)? Bacteria grow best in lukewarm foods. Never let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

Holiday meals are fun but need careful planning. How many people can you safely serve? And, how much time will it take to prepare the food? Don't try to feed more people than you can handle. Consider the size and quantity of the cooking equipment you have, your supply of eating utensils and dishes. Figure out how much refrigerator space you'll need to store foods.

Extension Service  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

## Holiday Meals Are Fun

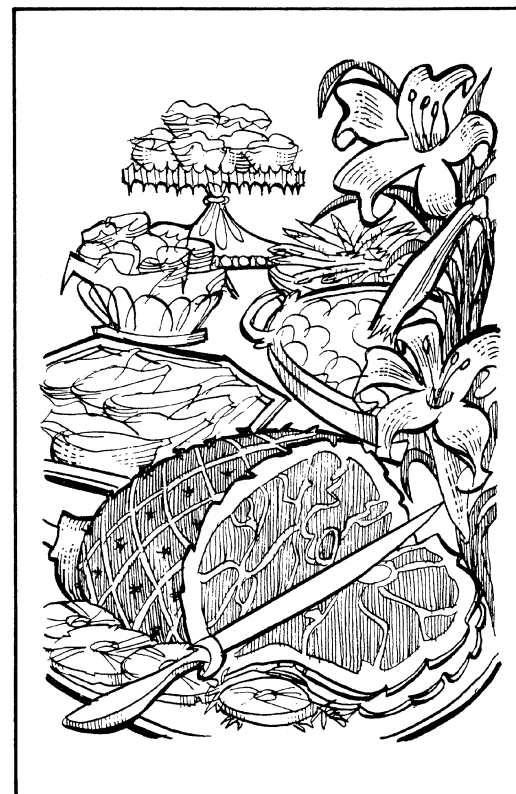
## Make Them Safe

By Evelyn B. Spindler, Ph.D., Nutritionist,  
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HE-140

## Easter Dinner



## Serve it Safely

# Holiday Meals— Things To Consider

*Baked Ham  
Creamed Onions  
Candied Sweet Potatoes  
Asparagus  
Rolls—Butter  
Almond Cream Puffs*

It's spring, and Easter Sunday is a special day in many homes, when families and relatives gather. This holiday may mean preparing a large family meal. Food safety precautions will help ensure a pleasant occasion.

Ham, like all meats, contains some bacteria. These are found in the air we breathe, on our skin, everywhere. Under certain conditions, bacteria can multiply. This is what we want to avoid.

Hams labeled "cured" or "cured and smoked" must be cooked before you eat them. *Cook to an internal temperature of 160° F.* "Fully cooked" hams are cooked thoroughly in processing and are ready to eat.

Never leave uncooked or cooked

ham at room temperature for more than 2 hours. Keep it COLD (below 40° F) or HOT (above 140° F).

People with colds and infections, or sores or cuts on their hands, should not handle foods, especially perishable foods such as ham. This may spread bacteria.

Refrigerate whole hams no longer than 7 days; cured half hams, cured ham slices, or fresh ham, no more than 3 days. Once open, any canned ham should be refrigerated. Check labels to see if it needs refrigeration before opening. Use it within 7 days.

Creamed onions are perishable items, too. Serve immediately. Do not allow them to stand at room temperature more than 2 hours. Use



some method of keeping them hot (above 140°).

Cream-filled desserts such as cream puffs are extremely perishable. Make them shortly before serving; keep them refrigerated; and don't keep leftovers, even though they are refrigerated, more than a day.

Easter eggs are decorative and fun for youngsters to make. But if you intend to eat the eggs, keep them refrigerated. Use them as a table centerpiece *once* for no longer than 2 hours. Then, they can still be eaten. Otherwise, just use the eggs as decorations and don't plan to eat them.

Can you prepare and serve the food to avoid foodborne illness? Your family may enjoy meals every day without problems, but on holidays when large groups get together, the types and larger quantities of foods present different problems. You may not have enough refrigerator space.

Bacteria can cause food poisoning. All they need to grow is the right combination of time, temperature, and moisture.

Foodborne illness can cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days. With young children and elderly people, the results can be more severe. Often, people mistake foodborne illness for a simple "bug" or virus. The real cause may be food that was not properly handled, prepared, or served. This can be prevented.

Can perishable foods such as cream pies, seafoods, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat, and poultry be kept